

Looking Back,

Moving Forward

Interim President Robert Kennedy's
Report to the Board of Regents



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
BOARD OF REGENTS
FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

CONNECTICUT STATE COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES



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LISTENING TOUR

Visiting 15 out of the 17 institutions so far, Interim President Robert Kennedy has spent 20 days – the equivalent of one work month – on the campuses of the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities (ConnSCU).

Who Did It Include?

- Students
- Staff
- Faculty
- Community Leaders
- Business Leaders
- Mayors/Town Officials
- Area Legislators



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WHAT DID WE LEARN?

- The campuses are full of great students who want to learn and succeed.
- There is wonderful leadership across the ConnSCU campuses, and a true commitment to their students.
- There are a number of cutting edge, state-of-the-art facilities at ConnSCU campuses across the state.
- There's a real importance to the word "community" in community colleges. Indeed, all of our institutions are embraced by the local region and its businesses, leadership, etc.



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WHAT DID WE LEARN? (cont.)

- The transferability of credits between institutions is slowing the students' progress toward degree completion. In some cases, they may need to stay an extra year to make up classes.
- There's a problem between the number of full time faculty vs. part-time faculty.
- Operating budgets at ConnSCU institutions are, like many other places, stretched.



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SYSTEM OFFICE STAFFING UPDATE

The Board of Regents transition period will be completed in 11 days. Staff appointments are being made with a cost-cutting mission in mind, and an eye toward efficiency and experience.

Several key positions have already been filled, allowing us to hit the ground running.

- **Executive Vice President**
Mike Meotti
- **Director of Public Affairs and Marketing**
Colleen Flanagan
- **VP of Human Resources**
Steve Weinberger (interim)

The search for the Chief Financial Officer – another key position – is underway.



We will meet or exceed the savings targets identified last year, and the money saved will be redirected back to the campuses to hire additional faculty.



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SYSTEM OFFICE STAFFING UPDATE

Vice Presidents of the Community Colleges and Universities

- Interim VP for Connecticut Community Colleges
Dr. David Levinson
- Interim VP for Connecticut State Universities
Dr. Louise Feroe

More With Less

In reviewing the current structure at both the CSU and CCC central offices, it's clear that in many cases we had two, or in some cases, three of a certain position or work function. There's not room in the budget for that kind of repetition.

The Governor has said he wants to create one of the best public education systems in the country, with a goal of graduating more students who are better equipped to compete in the 21st century economy.



We will find new and innovative ways to “do more with less,” allowing that money to funnel back toward the campuses.



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The key goal that defines our work: Increase the educational attainment level of Connecticut's adult population.

- Educational attainment level is one of the most important drivers of a state's economy and quality of life.
- There is clearly a mismatch between industry needs and our graduates.
- For the full-time, first-time class entering a CSU in Fall 2004, 19% graduated from that CSU within 4 years; 46% graduated from that CSU within 6 years.
- For the full-time, first-time class entering a CCC in Fall 2006, 3% finished their degree from that CCC in 2 years; 11% finished in 3 years; 16% finished in 4 years. But, fostering transfer students (those leaving a CCC before attaining a degree) is part of the CCC's mission and is generally under-appreciated in these statistics.



1990

Connecticut was #1 in the educational level of its adult workforce

2011

Connecticut has dropped to the bottom half of states in young adult educational attainment levels



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STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

1. Preparing Students

Students should enter college prepared, and we must improve college readiness opportunities for those who are not.

2. Efficient and Easier Transfers

Students should benefit from a transfer process between a public community college to a state university that is seamless and easier for degree completion.

3. Spurring Innovation

Students and faculty should be spurred to innovate and learn and teach in settings that foster entrepreneurship.

4. Private Sector Collaboration

Students should benefit from enhanced collaboration and partnerships between the state's higher education system and the private sector.



These four strategic priorities will be our primary focus and guide our actions with all 17 ConnSCU institutions.



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There is serious work to do, but...

It can be done.

- First, and perhaps most importantly, we need to change the culture and break away from doing things simply because “we’ve always done it this way.”
- The realignment will take some time to be fully implemented, cost savings can and will be achieved, and money can and will be turned back to the classroom.
- Higher education is known for its shared governance, and while this is the Land of Steady Habits, people in and out of higher education are beginning to understand that if we are to truly be competitive as a state and prepare our students to excel, we need to step up our game.

“Faith is taking the first step, even when you don’t see the whole staircase.”

- Martin Luther King, Jr.



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